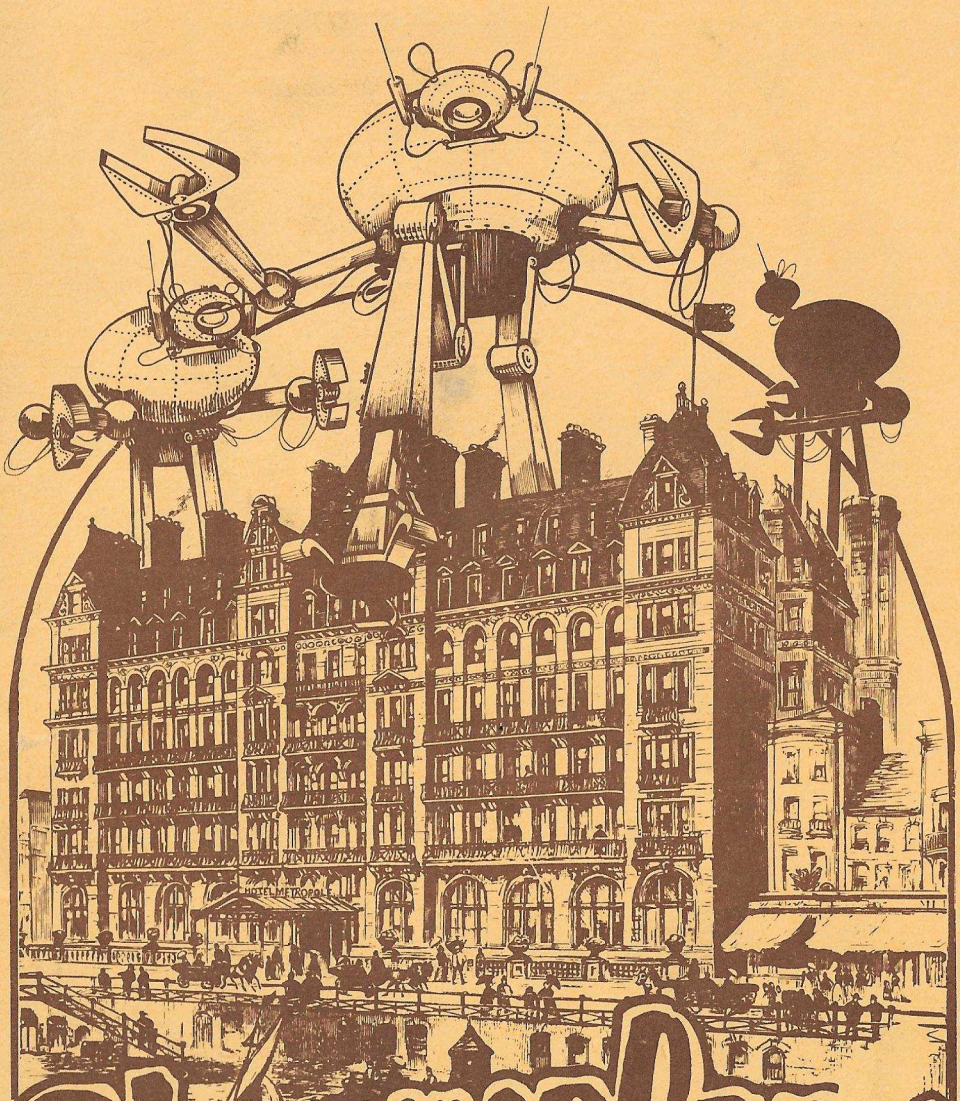


Channelcon

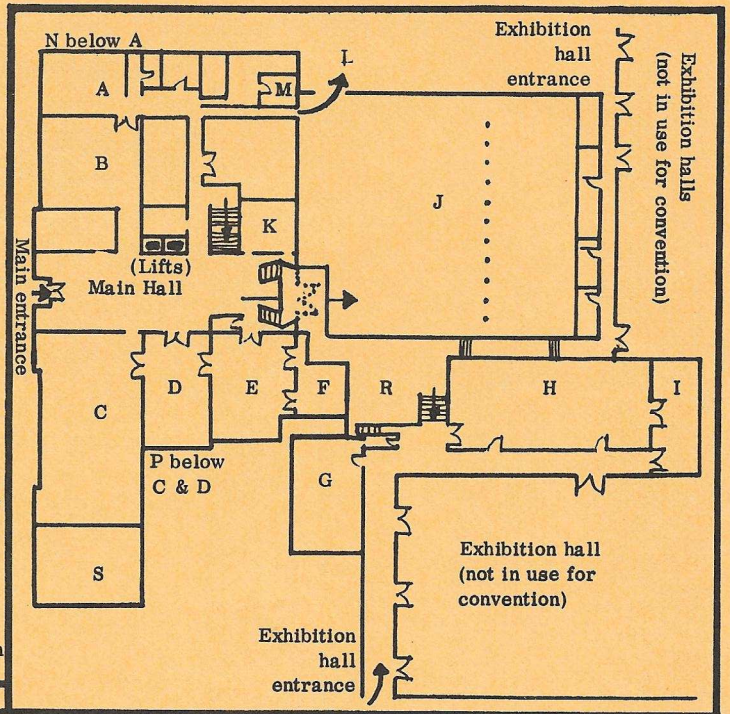
The 1982 Easter SF Convention

Hotel plan

and convention guide

A: Residents' Lounge
B: Buttery — Hotel restaurant
C: Cameo Room — Breakfast, buffet lunch
D: Cocktail Bar, E: Ambassador Room — Convention bar
F: Primrose Room — Speakers' anteroom, evening buffet
G: Norfolk Room — Book Room
H: Clarence Room — Disco & groups; Fan Room events
I: North End Room — Fan Room (& bar)
J: Winter Garden — Main Programme, Banquet
K: Churchill Room — Registration, convention office
L: Ladies' Hairdressing Salon
M: Gentlemen's Hairdressing
N: County Suite — Art Show
P: (Devon Room — Children's room, video programme; (York Room — Alternate Programme
R: Sussex Lounge — Extra bar
S: Kent, Surrey & Dorset Suites
T: Starlit Room (7th floor, not shown).

Book Room and Art Show opening times:
Fri.-Sun: 10 am-6 pm. Book Room only, Mon. 10 am-1 pm



Alternate programme	York Room	R
Art Show	County Suite	N
Banquet	Winter Garden	J
Bar	Cocktail Bar	D,E
"	Sussex Lounge	R
"	North End Room	I
Book Room	Norfolk Room	G
Breakfast	Cameo Room	C

Buffet lunch	Cameo Room	C
Buffet supper	Primrose Room	F
Children's room	Devon Room	P
Convention office	Churchill Room	K
Disco, groups	Clarence Room	H
Fan Room	North End Room	I
Fan Room events	Clarence Room	H

Fancy Dress	Winter Garden	J
Main Programme	Winter Garden	J
Registration	Churchill Room	K
Restaurant	Buttery	B
"	Starlit Room	7th floor
Speakers' anteroom	Primrose Room	F
Video programme	Devon Room	P

CHANNELCON PROGRAMME BOOK

33rd British Easter Science Fiction Convention
Metropole Hotel, Brighton
9th - 12th April 1982

GUESTS OF HONOUR

ANGELA CARTER
JOHN SLADEK

Toastmaster
Josephine Saxton

THE COMMITTEE

Chris Atkinson... Book Room, Art Show
Jim Barker..... Fan Room
Pat Charnock .... Memberships
Eve Harvey..... Chairman
Coral Jackson.... Publications
Rob Jackson..... Typing & layout
Paul Kincaid..... Programme
Janice Maule..... Treasurer

SUB-COMMITTEE

Arnold Akien..... Video & equipment hire
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Eve Harvey

GOODBYE — hope you enjoyed yourself!

No, the title isn't merely an eye-catcher. If a convention is successful, most people are too involved in the business of enjoying themselves to read the Programme Book; this comes after the event, hopefully in recalling happy memories. So my confidence in the committee, the hotel management and you, the fans, makes the title perfectly logical.

For me, the most onerous part of a chairman's responsibilities has been writing pieces such as this. What do I say? In desperation I went back to previous Programme Books for guidance and enlightenment, starting with my first convention — Tynecon '74.

In his introduction, Ian Maule discussed the vitality of fannish activity in the Newcastle area and the close geographical proximity of the committee. In contrast, we could be compared to an amoeba — nucleus in London and pseudopods extending from Folkestone to Falkirk. With a venue in Brighton, one might expect there to be communication problems, but we haven't found them insurmountable and, as a by-product, British Telecom have announced record profits.

In the following year Malcolm Edwards described his nightmares as chairman of Seacon '75. As for me, mine come during the day; they fill those never-ending seconds between the phone ringing and finding out it isn't someone with a problem.

After Mancon 5 and Eastercon '77 we come to Skycon in 1978. Perusing this Programme Book brought back mixed memories. Many of you may not know that this should have been Channelcon 1 at the Metropole in Brighton. John and I were in the process of putting a bid together with the help of such people as Greg Pickersgill, Simone Walsh, John Piggott, and Roy Kettle when this young upstart Kev Smith decided it would be a great idea to have "a real contest for a change." Since we couldn't persuade the hotel to reduce room rates below £20 for a double room (for the room, not per person), we couldn't compete with Kev's £12 and that Channelcon never materialised. Ah, me.

In 1979, Yorcon 1 faced the unenviable task of persuading people they could afford an Eastercon and a Worldcon. Luckily they were successful and 400-odd of us enjoyed one of the best cons for a long while. In his introduction, Mike Dickinson chronicled the development of their bid. Channelcon first saw the light of day one languid afternoon in September 1979. Our small flat had just hosted the last mailing marathon for the Worldcon, Seacon '79 — the mailing of Programme Books to those who didn't attend. The

remnant of the committee were sitting around reminiscing about Seacon and stating categorically "NEVER AGAIN!" when some snake in the grass (Kath Mitchell by name) uttered those immortal words "after that epic, wouldn't it be fun to do an Eastercon?" To make things worse, Chris Atkinson, Pat Charnock and Coral Jackson simultaneously replied, musingly, "Hmm, yes." The die was cast as I found myself irresistibly compelled to agree.

Subsequent meetings allocated jobs and irrevocably committed us to the bid. Even the introduction of two new committee members in the guise of Jackson Jr and Charnock Jr (I'm told it's not catching) couldn't slow the momentum until now, seven weeks before the event, I find what started life as a "fun idea" has developed into what I hope will be a fun reality.

So, if this was your first convention, or even second or third, and you wanted to pluck up the courage to talk to someone, heed my words. Next time, do so; they won't bite your head off — but make sure you keep all your past Programme Books; you never know what that initial step will lead to. After all, I had no idea as I sat in the Royal Station Hotel, Newcastle, wondering how I could get to know some of the people standing in groups around the bar, that in seven years' time I'd be searching that Programme Book for inspiration for my own Chairman's Welcome!

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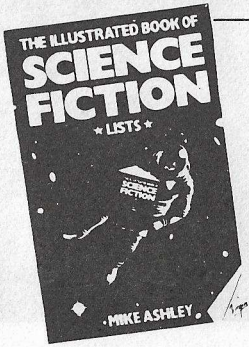

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Guest of Honour Profile

ANGELA CARTER

The Angela Carter Story

by John Sladek

Mrs. Carter lives in cat-haunted seclusion in a part of South London where the policemen have always gone in pairs since the creation of the force and the only sounds are the put-put-put of the armoured Fiats of social workers.

On her father's side, she is descended from a long line of Aberdeen witches, which accounts for her complete scepticism in matters of the occult. "Once you've seen how it's all done with mirrors, then, I tell you, it's just yawn, yawn, yawn," she opines, in her characteristic well-bred drawl which only slips in moments of stress.

Why, then, you might ask, does she always choose to write about werewolves, metamorphoses, transexuality, blood-stained wedding dresses and the shadowy places of the psyche? Why do the clocks in her house tell such a wide variety of times? Why do her cats sit up at table and take meals with the family? Life is a complex of unanswerable questions, she tittered, idly transforming a passing social worker into a fair simulacrum of Danny La Rue to the applause of all.

Her hobbies include typewriter maintenance and cookery; for the last fifteen years, on and off, she has been compiling a cookery book to be titled: "Messalina's Kitchen", progress impeded by the difficulty of finding punters to test the recipes. For the rest, you'll find her a dead ringer for the late Joyce Grenfell, the head prefect of the sf world.

She is breaking off work on a long novel about clowns and tigers in order to attend Channelcon but threatens to bring neither clowns nor tigers with her. She is considerably excited by Channelcon's proximity to the Brighton Pavilion, which she considers to be one of the greatest works of the human spirit.

Angela Carter: Bibliography

A bibliography of first editions compiled by **CHRIS MORGAN**

(1) Shadow Dance Heinemann hardcover 1966, novel (retitled as Honeybuzzard for its UK paperback edition)

(2) ** The Magic Toyshop Heinemann hardcover 1967, novel (there is a Virago paperback in print)

(3) Several Perceptions Heinemann hardcover 1968, novel

(4) ** Heroes and Villains Heinemann hardcover 1969, novel (there is a King Penguin paperback in print)

(5) Love Hart-Davis hardcover 1971, novel

(6) ** The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman Hart-Davis hardcover 1972 (retitled as The War of Dreams in the US; there is a King Penguin paperback in print)

(7) ** Fireworks: Nine Profane Pieces. Quartet hardcover 1974, collection of stories (the Quartet paperback edition is officially out of print but is available from some shops). Contents: A Souvenir of Japan, The Executioner's Beautiful Daughter, The Loves of Lady Purple, The Smile of Winter, Penetrating to the Heart of the Forest, Flesh and the Mirror, Master, Reflections, Elegy for a Free-lance, Afterword.

(8) The Passion of New Eve Gollancz hardcover 1977, novel

(9) ** The Bloody Chamber and other stories Gollancz hardcover 1979, collection of stories (there is a King Penguin paperback in print). Contents: The Bloody Chamber, The Courtship of Mr. Lyon, The Tiger's Bride, Puss-in-Boots, The Erl-King, The Snow Child, The Lady in the House of Love, The Werewolf, The Company of Wolves, Wolf-Alice.

Non-fiction:

(10)** The Sadeian Women: an exercise in cultural history. Virago hardcover 1979 (there is a Virago paperback in print)

** This signifies that there is an edition of the book in print, which may be bought in the Book Room.

We would like to thank Chris Morgan for producing the bibliographies of Angela Carter and John Sladek at short notice, and indeed to thank all those who wrote for this Programme Book, some of them at equally short notice. Any brevity in the bibliographies is due to the speed with which they were produced. — Coral and Rob Jackson

Angela Carter: A Personal Appreciation

EVE HARVEY

In our compartmentalised, prepackaged world Angela Carter is an anomaly, a publisher's nightmare. Like Doris Lessing, she is one of those rare writers who defy classification; the only suitable category is that unfortunately sparsely populated area where literary excellence is the main criterion.

She is reminiscent of Lessing in that her writing style can raise prose to the level of poetry, but she surpasses her in that the characters she portrays exude life from every page. For me, she also combines the best of both Ballard and Fowles. Like Ballard, she possesses the ability to depict utter desolation and the total degeneration of society; like Fowles, her characterisation is such that, no matter how bizarre the circumstances (and believe me, they can be bizarre) all her characters, not only the main protagonists, appear real and their actions are utterly believable in the context of the plot.

The Passion of New Eve provides an excellent example of her Ballardian abilities. In this novel the reader is led through a bizarre, violent, bestial and sexually perverse corruption of the American Dream as he/she follows the odyssey of an innocent Englishman, Evelyn, who emigrates to the USA in the hope of finding the America of the traditional Great American Dream. Carter's portrayal of the dissolution of American society is excellent; not only is it believable in all its absurdities, but her description of the horrors and dementia that go with a disintegrating society surpass, for me at least, anything Ballard has done.

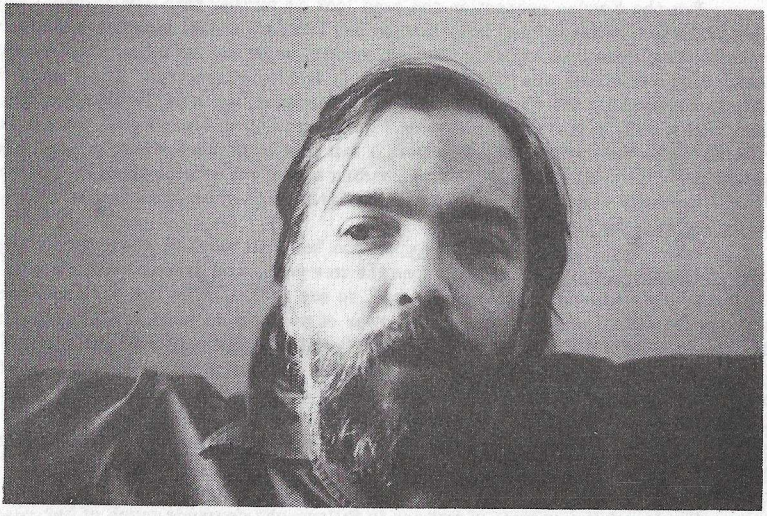
For the Fowles connection one need look no further than The Bloody Chamber. This collection of traditional fairy stories has been given that indescribable Carter touch, transforming them into haunting, stylish, erotic, nightmarish tales. Unlike their antecedents, these variations are peopled with living, feeling characters. The reader develops an affinity not only for the traditional heroes or heroines, such as the Beast in Beauty and the Beast which, a la Carter, becomes "The Courtship of Mr. Lyon", but also for the villains — the werewolves in particular. I felt this even more strongly when I had the pleasure of listening to Angela Carter reading one of the stories from the collection — "The Werewolf" — and was reminded of the feelings of sympathy inspired by Anne Rice's Interview with the Vampire.

After The Passion of New Eve, for me her best work is The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman. This describes the war with, and eventual victory over Doctor Hoffman. His weapons are unconventional, to say the least; he has devised a method of altering the fabric of reality using the power of our own subconscious desires, sexual desires in particular. We follow the 'hero' Desiderio, as he is sent out of the City to track down and eventually destroy Dr. Hoffman. The novel makes a very important statement about our motivations — we are guided by our own desires and are incapable of controlling our own destinies. This theme pervades much of Angela Carter's work (see Heroes and Villains) and she argues her case very persuasively. So beware: no matter how strongly you discount the theory, she propounds it so well that you won't notice your own metamorphosis.

She is not the easiest of writers to follow; she demands much of her readers, but the effort is well rewarded. If you haven't read any Angela Carter yet, do take this opportunity to explore new and exciting territories.

Guest of Honour Profile

JOHN SLADEK



John Sladek - the most unforgettable man I have ever met

by Angela Carter

John Sladek (as he likes to be called) is a man of contradictions: he lives in London, yet sets his novels in the American Midwest. He writes about metal people, yet he has never actually met one. He owns five hundred pairs of shoes, yet prefers to wear the same shabby pair of Hush Puppies year after year. He is one of the richest men in the world, yet virtually a prisoner in his own suite of rooms at a Las Vegas hotel. Almost penniless, he nevertheless continues to write for a living.

Sladek (he insists it is his real name) was born in the state of Iowa, a harsh land where terse peasants speak only to repeat pollen counts. He's still an Iowa farm boy, he claims. "Beneath this smooth veneer of London sophisticate, clubman and raconteur," he says, "beats the simple heart of a horny handed sod-buster."

His novel, Roderick, or The Education of a Young Machine, is not, he tells me, autobiographical, nor is its sequel, Roderick at Random. Both are published by Granada, the first in luxurious hardcover and (soon) in sleek paperback editions, the second is now in press. I had not asked why he wrote about robots but he explained:

"I write about robots," he said, "not just because I am obsessed with them, but because I believe the human species is in some way obsessed with them. At least, the robot idea has been with us for a long time, in legends like Talos, Pygmalion, and the Golem stories. What's more, people seem to have been actually trying to build moving statues, puppets, clockwork figures and so on, for a few millennia. For some reason, we seem to need the idea of artificial people, or tinfolk."

My attention began to wander as he spoke. I thought of Auerbach's conjecture that "there is always going on within us a process of formulation and interpretation whose subject matter is our own self." Before I could give it serious consideration, however, John (as he styles himself) went on:

"My next novel, Tik-Tok, will also be about robots," he said. "People are always using robot fantasies to work out theories of good and evil, and this is no exception. Tik-Tok will be I hope a gripping tale of unrelenting evil."

I remarked that it sounded an interesting yarn. Sladek stood on the patio of his palatine Beverley Hills home and stared out over the famous typewriter-shaped swimming pool. The pool is in fact a working typewriter but he prefers to swim in it, this man of contradictions.

John Sladek: Bibliography

A bibliography of first editions compiled by **CHRIS MORGAN**

(1) The Castle and the Key Paperback Library paperback 1967, gothic novel under the pseudonym Cassandra Knye

(2) The Reproductive System Gollancz hardcover 1968, SF novel (retitled as Mechasm in US)

(3) The Muller-Fokker Effect Hutchinson hardcover 1970, SF novel

(4) The Steam-Driven Boy and other strangers Panther paperback 1973, SF collection. Contents: The Secret of the Old Custard, The Aggressor, The Best-Seller, Is There Death on Other Planets?, The Happy Breed, A Report on the Migrations of Educational Materials, The Singular Visitor from Not-Yet, The Short Happy Wife of Mansard Eliot, The Momster, 1937 AD!, Secret Identity, The Transcendental Sandwich, The Steam-Driven Boy; (The Parodies) The Purloined Butter, Pemberly's Start-Afresh Calliope, Ralph 4F, Engineer to the Gods, Broot Force, Joy Ride, The Moon Is Sixpence, Solar Shoe Salesman, One Damned Thing after Another, The Sublimation World.

(5) Black Aura Cape hardcover 1974, crime novel

(6) Keep the Giraffe Burning Panther paperback 1977, SF collection. Contents: Foreword, Elephant with Wooden Leg, The Design, The Face, The Master Plan, Flatland, A Game of Jump, The Hammer of Evil, The Locked Room, Another Look, Space Shoes of the Gods, The Poets of Millgrove Iowa, The Commentaries, Heavens Below, Scenes from Rural Life, The Secret of the Old Custard, Undecember, The Great Wall of Mexico, Afterword.

(7) Invisible Green Gollancz hardcover, crime novel

(8) ** Roderick Granada hardcover 1980, SF novel (note that there is a sequel due to appear soon, and that the two volumes are being published as three volumes in the US; there is a Granada paperback in print)

(9) ** The Best of John Sladek Pocket Books paperback 1981, SF collection (this edition is in print). Contents: The Secret of the Old Custard, The Poets of Millgrove Iowa, The Best-Seller, Is There Death on Other Planets?, The Happy Breed, The Singular Visitor from Not-Yet, The Short Happy Wife of Mansard Eliot, The Momster, 1937 AD!, The Transcendental Sandwich, The Steam-Driven Boy, Elephant with Wooden Leg, The Locked Room, The Face, Heavens Below, Space Shoes of the Gods; (The Parodies:) The Purloined Butter, Pemberly's Start-Afresh Calliope, Ralph 4F, Engineer to the Gods, Broot Force, Joy Ride, The Moon Is Sixpence, Solar Shoe Salesman, One Damned Thing after Another, The Sublimation World.

With Thomas M. Disch:

(10) The House that Fear Built Paperback Library paperback 1976, gothic novel under the pseudonym Cassandra Knye

(11) Black Alice Doubleday hardcover 1968, crime novel under the pseudonym Thom Demijohn

Non-fiction:

(12)** The New Apocrypha: A Guide to Strange Sciences and Occult Beliefs. Hart-Davis hardcover 1973 (there is a Granada paperback in print)

** This signifies that there is an edition of the book in print, which may be bought in the Book Room.

NOT THE KURT VONNEGUT Jr.

An appreciation of John Sladek by **JOHN CLUTE**

So here we go again. Kurt Vonnegut and John Sladek, compare and contrast. But there's a reason, there usually is. Both writers are from the American Mid-West, home of Hamlin Garland and the Macdonaldburgergesellschaft. Both writers are exiles, internal and external, from the asphalted car-choked plains they grew up in and whose suburbs and offices and factories and shopping centres and campuses they have again and again obsessively recast as science fiction of the remotest, darkest, wildest, funniest sort possible. It is the science fiction of nightmare. Nightmare transfigured into thin-ice guffaws and enigmas.

That much they share. And one other thing. They are both lapsed Catholics, which may be the heart of the nightmare for them, or at any rate one way of trying to understand it. For the lapsed Catholic the world, which is of course Godless, has been drained of all sense. And there's nothing more psychopathic than a lapsed Catholic trying to create some moral sense to live by in an absurd — and damned — world.

But if there's something that radically distinguishes Sladek from Vonnegut it is the wry elusive dignity with which he apprehends this dehumanising and meaningless world of ours, which he makes stories out of. Self-pitying, intrusive, protesting far too much, Vonnegut is always stage-front in his books, bidding us memorise his moral profile, write him letters about it, keep him alive. This is not the case with John Sladek, and the fact that he is so bravely absent from his frightening hilarious parables of the absurd may well explain how long it has taken his books and stories — more than 100 of them already — to catch on. He is a lapsed Catholic who does not advertise.

So far there are three science fiction novels from his pen, The Reproductive System (1968), The Muller-Fokker Effect (1970) and Roderick (1980), the last title being half of a long novel about the education of a young robot and his assimilation into disintegrating human societies as a mime or picaro; part two, due this year (from Granada), will be called Roderick at Random. A further novel about robots as mirrors and sinless usurpers, Tik-Tok, is also due this year (from Corgi). His collections to date are The Steam-Driven Boy and Other Strangers (1973) and Keep the Giraffe Burning (1977 for 1978); a third collection, Alien Accounts, is again due this year (from Panther).

It may sound illogical to speak of parables of the absurd, but if Sladek's work leaves one sustaining impression, after the jokes have been absorbed, it is of a deep sustaining inhuman or parahuman orderliness. Beneath the lunacies of a Godless world in which humans are beginning to run down because there is no meaning to sustain them, robots and ciphers meet and mate. And make sense of Things.

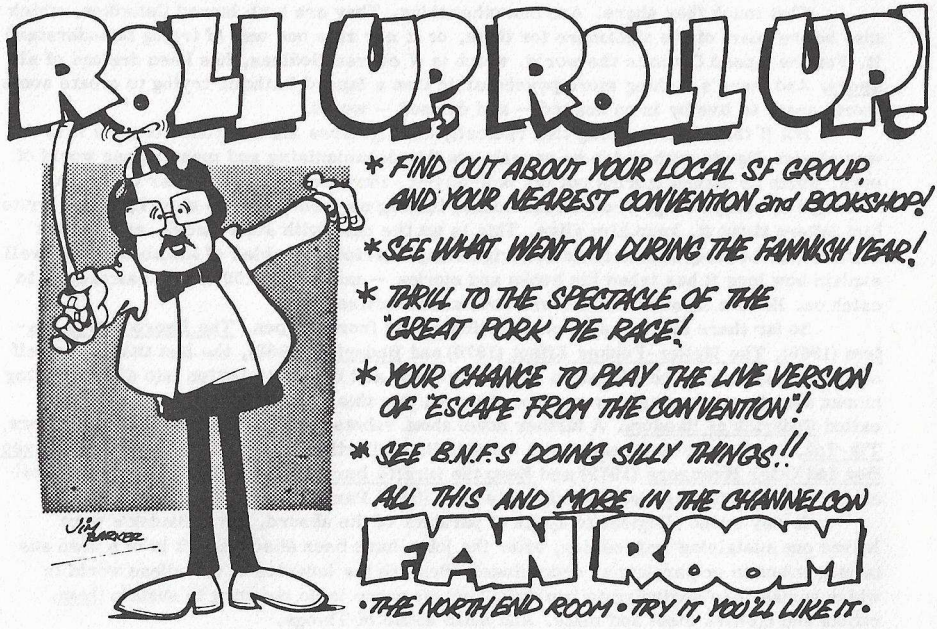
Toastmaster

Josephine Saxton

introduced by **HILARY BAILEY**

Your Toastmistress, Master or Person at Channelcon is Josephine Saxton; an amazing master, mistress or person who is an ace writer as well as an ace breadmaker, dressmaker, ace interior decorator and the only master, mistress or person I know who has personally chopped up her own crazy paving and laid it in the garden single-handed. I do not know what she is doing now, it could be hang-gliding or studying old-fashioned medicine; but at the same time I am sure she is writing another book or another short story in that inimitable way she has of combining the bizarre, the entirely natural and the witty.

Josephine was born in Yorkshire, which probably accounts for her fundamental idea that you do whatever comes to hand and do it as well as possible. In her time she has been an invisible mender, a chef, and countless other things including a mother of three; but whatever else she has been doing, she has always been a writer. She can appear in any disguise you care to name from seductress to literary lady. She is always utterly truthful, and full of guts; a woman of spirit, wit and — dare I say it — a lot of integrity.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ALL THIS AND MORE IN THE CHANNELCON
FAN ROOM
• THE NORTH END ROOM • TRY IT, YOU'LL LIKE IT •
JIM BARKER

The Committee

CHRIS ATKINSON, Book Room

Chris reputedly discovered fandom in 1966, in a Yarmouth laundry basket. This experience was so hair-raising that she kept very quiet for a long time, but has recently regained her courage sufficiently to co-produce a fanzine and write a few articles. In 1981, Chris won the Nova Best Fanwriter Award, and was also voted nearly as well dressed as Joseph Nicholas. She has never been on a con committee before, but is trying hard, and can easily be bribed with chocolate.

JIM BARKER, Fan Room

He's the one with the moustache, gibbering away to himself in a Scottish accent at the front of the Fan Room. A failed TAFF candidate and Fanartist Hugo nominee, Jim is probably best-known for the vast quantities of cartoons he has supplied to fanzines since entering fandom in 1974. He was responsible for illustrating the two volumes of Bob Shaw articles published by Inca Press in the late Seventies, co-created Elmer T. Hack and was totally responsible for creating the comic strip The Captive, an example of which can be found in this very programme book.

An avid cartoon and comic strip fan, Jim has made a few inroads into professional publishing and in 1981 won an award from the Cartoonists' Club of Great Britain for the Best Unpublished Comic Strip of the Year. He collaborated with Bob Shaw on a series of comic strips about a robot, MacHinery, which, so far, has failed to find a buyer.

When he entered fandom Jim was bearded, long-haired and overweight. The beard, most of the hair and eighty pounds of the weight couldn't make it to Channelcon, but the rest of him can be found in the Fan Room (the North End Room). Pay him a visit and make an old fan very happy.

PAT CHARNOCK, Memberships by Graham Charnock

When I married Pat ten years ago I little realised that ten years later I'd be struggling for something meaningful to say about her role in organising Channelcon. The fact that it's a struggle means that I'm the wrong guy for the job. It's all too close to home for me. It's nothing for me to come home after a hard day at the shop to see her nonchalantly juggling a pot-roast in one hand, a bawling baby Jimmy in the other, and a card-index membership file on her nose. The phone rings and if it's not the local health visitor advising on little Jimmy Charnock's allergic reaction to eggy substances, it's little Jimmy Fan in person asking why he hasn't received Progress Report No. 24 yet.

This woman is indefatigable. What's more she's tireless. One day she'll make some convention organiser a lovely membership secretary.

EVE HARVEY, Chairman

Whilst frantically trying to think up something to say about myself, I started musing on the ramifications of seemingly insignificant actions. For instance, if I hadn't agreed with Dave Pringle, way back in 1973, that Leeds University needed a science fiction society, I wonder if the Leeds group would have got started and if not, whether we would have had Yorcons I and II? One thing is definite, I wouldn't have met my husband, John, and thus

would probably never have attended my first convention — Tynecon in 1974. Taking matters further, Ghas (our joint fanzine with Carol Gregory) would never have been foisted on the unsuspecting world, Skycon would have had a different film programme, Seacon '79 would not have had a Fan Room and BSFA members would never have had to suffer our editorship of Matrix. Bringing things up-to-date, my fanzine Wallbanger would never have seen the light of day and I definitely would not be biting my fingernails to the elbows as Chairman of Channelcon. Wouldn't the world have been a pleasant place!

CORAL & ROB JACKSON, Publications

Coral entered fandom in 1974, and met her overweight psychiatrist and erstwhile Gannet faneditor husband Rob through it; they married in 1979. Coral gave up work (neuropsychopharmacology, if you want to know and can spell it) in favour of maternity; and Rob gave up living in Newcastle and editing Maya in favour of married life, and gave up fanediting altogether (for now) in favour of paternity and working harder as a psychiatrist. Coral found herself driven half round the bend by not going out to work and exercising her brain, and Rob was the same through working too hard (it takes one to know one, of course). So they've swopped roles. Coral now relaxes by working part-time observing psychiatrists and also by being a Channelcon committee member, and Rob can take a rest from carrying the woes of the world's woeful by typing and laying out whatever Coral and the rest of the Channelcon team shove in front of his nose.

At Channelcon, you'll recognise Coral as the committee member with dark hair and glasses who's explaining just why Rob left that bit in, and Rob as the bearded, balding chap helplessly following an insatiably curious and very stubborn seventeen-month-old daughter around — a daughter who's already showing fannish traits by being alternately bookworm, enthusiastic experimenter with strange drinks and agent of chaos if unleashed.

PAUL KINCAID, Programme

Born 1952; height 5'10"; weight too much; marital status available; entry into fandom Seacon '75. He writes travel brochures for a living, which explains has occasional forays to such far-flung and exotic places as Buxton and Glasgow. It also provides the material for his irregular fanzine A Pauling. Other fannish ventures include the fanzine Tripe Pickers' Journal and various contributions to fandom's less discerning editors. He is also a regular reviewer for Vector and Arena, Features Editor of Vector, and co-editor of the BSFA's new series of bibliographies. In his spare time his hobbies include getting drunk and sleeping it off. Despite temporary fannish fashion he stubbornly retains his beard. Channelcon is the first convention he has helped organise. He swears never again — until the next time.

JANICE MAULE, Treasurer

Janice Maule, one of the infamous horde of neos introduced to fandom by Science Fiction Monthly, attended her first convention in 1975 (Seacon) and has since found it almost impossible to break the habit. She is an accountant by profession but still finds her fannish treasurerships (she is currently treasurer of the British Science Fiction Association as well as being treasurer of Channelcon) a pleasant change as it gives her a chance to get her hands on some actual cash! At any convention where she is not on the committee, if you see someone with long hair and no knowledge of Egyptology engrossed in some knitting, that will probably be Janice.

NOW ON SALE

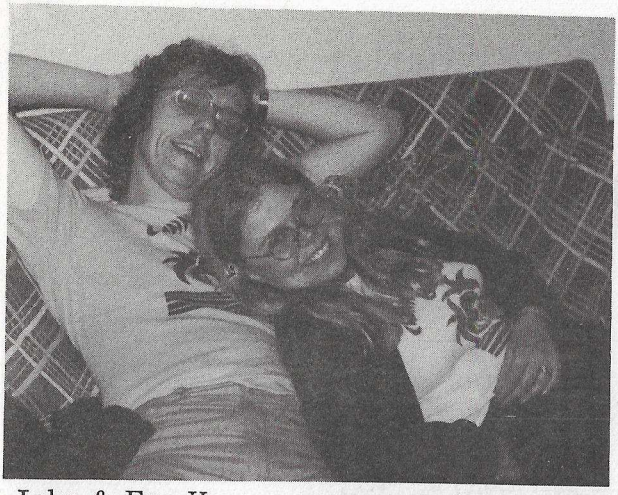
READ...

Stories by: CONNIE WILLIS
HARLAN ELLISON
GREGG KEIZER
in the April issue of

OMNI

THE MAGAZINE OF TOMORROW

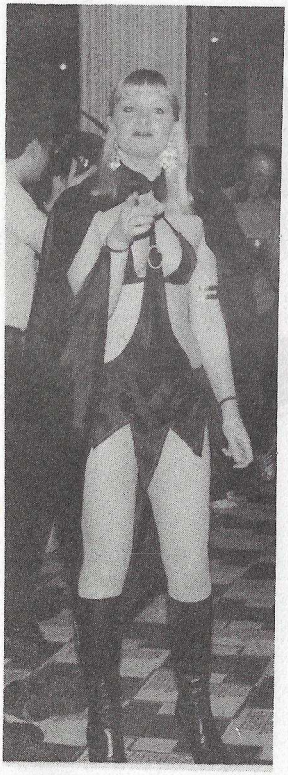
NOW ON SALE



John & Eve Harvey
... relaxing!

Paul Kincaid thinking
up programme ideas

Anne Page:
Fancy Dress



Rob & Coral Jackson
overseeing collating
of Progress Reports

Rochelle Dorey:
Films

Jim Barker dreaming of pork pies

Pat Charnock happy at yet another change of address

Janice Maule sorting out the accounts

Linda Pickersgill: Advertising

Chris Atkinson being bribed with chocolate

EUROCON

If there's one date in SF which everybody knows, apart from 2001, then it must be 1984. That's the year we'd like the EUROPEAN SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION to come to Britain, in combination with the regular Eastercon.

Every two years since 1972 cons have been held with the special aim of bringing fans and pros together from as many different countries as possible. The venues have been as far apart as Poland, Belgium and Italy, and most have been in conjunction with a national con. To win the 1984 Eurocon we must bid in Switzerland later this year - and that means we need your support right away!

We aim to organise a memorable convention which will be a traditional Eastercon plus a convention that can be enjoyed by people from all over Europe. This is our chance to show the rest of Europe that British cons are the best!

We plan to hold the convention at the Brighton Metropole which is anxious to have us and will quote the same discount on their standard fees as on previous occasions.

At present there are over 30 people actively involved in the 1984 bid. Those involved in the paperwork side of the bid are as follows; John Brunner (Ex-Officio), Alan Dorey (BSFA Liaison), John Fairey (Treasurer), Pauline and Chris Morgan (Registrations), and Geoff Rippington (Publications and Publicity).

If you wish to Pre-Support Eurocon 84 UK! sign up at the convention now or send £1.00 (payable to Eurocon 84 UK!) to Pauline Morgan, 39 Hollybrow, Selly Oak, Birmingham, B29 4LX.

EUROCON 84 UK! IS GOING TO BE THE CONVENTION OF THE DECADE !!!!!

84 UK!

About Brighton

(Look Mum, there's a world out there!)

If you view one of the benefits of an Easter convention as the opportunity to see other parts of Britain, and therefore want to take some time off from the convention to look around the local area, Brighton has so much to offer that you could find yourself spoilt for choice.

Having grown from the small fishing village of Brighthelmstone into a fashionable spa town during the time of the Prince Regent, and latterly into a tourist area and conference centre, Brighton has something for everybody and has cleverly managed to maintain the best of its chequered history for the enjoyment of its visitors.

For instance, it has the Lanes. This is the original fishing village which has been preserved in the centre of the concrete jungle of the Brighton conurbation. Bounded by West Street, East Street and North Street (South Street is the sea, of course) it is a must for anyone who enjoys a trip through our history. It has been modernised in places, but the pedestrian precincts containing small boutiques mingle well with the old narrow alleys and original houses. The area specialises today in antique shops and antiquarian bookshops. If you get the chance, do go and see it.

If you want to go shopping, however, you have only to go out of the hotel and turn up one of the side-streets running north from the seafront and you'll find Eastern Road, one of Brighton's three main shopping centres.

I could continue ad infinitum: the Brighton Marina is only a couple of miles along the seafront; the Dolphinarium stands opposite Palace Pier; there are the two piers themselves, although West Pier is now unfortunately derelict. The list continues, and I haven't even mentioned the Royal Pavilion, Steine Gardens, Preston Park or Devil's Dyke.

What most people are interested in, however, is where to get their food. Here you really will be spoilt for choice, as anyone who tasted the delights during Seacon '79 will know only too well. In addition to the food being provided in the hotel itself, an extensive range of cheap bar snacks are available in the pub which forms part of the hotel (only accessible from the main road, however). If you want to venture further afield, you will not have far to go. I feel safe in claiming that Brighton boasts more restaurants of a more varied nature than most other towns of similar size in Britain and I will gladly come and sample all those in your chosen area to see if they compare (at your expense!). In just one street — Preston Street — a mere 300 yards or so from the Metropole, there are the following: Aberdeen Steak House, China Garden, Athenian Steak and Kebab House, Kismet Turkish Restaurant and Barbarella's. And these are merely the ones I can remember from a recent visit! There are also Indian and Italian restaurants in the same street. An even better area for Indian restaurants is the Lanes, with Ship Street, Market Street and Duke Street being especially worth a visit.

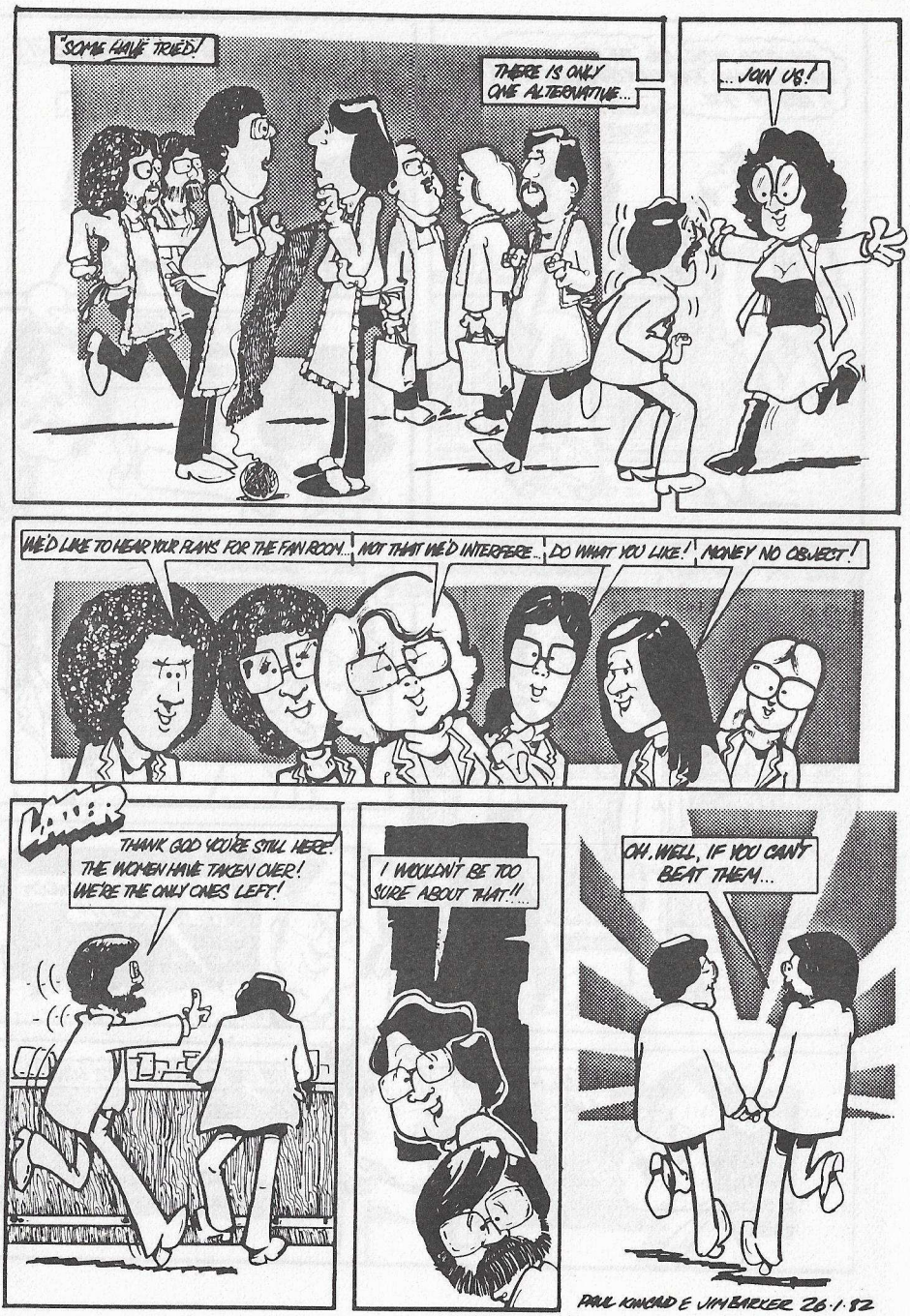
Obviously I cannot go into too much detail here, but if you have a query, do go to the Information Desk which should be manned by some representatives of the local sf group and their local knowledge should help solve any problems you may have.

And if you've finished this with the feeling that I may be somewhat partisan, you'd be right — not only was I born in Brighton, but spent over 20 years there. However, like all things, it's not until you don't have them any more that you miss them — it wasn't until I left Brighton that I really came to appreciate what an interesting place it is. I hope you find the time to enjoy some of it.

— Eve Harvey

THE CAPTIVES!
ONE MORNING IN THE CONVENTION...
WITH LONG TO BE, CHRIS, PAT, JANICE, CORAL, LINDA & ROCHELLE...
PSST!
NO, JUST A BIT HUNGOVER... WHAT THE.....?
GOOD MORNING, MISS. WE'VE TAKEN OVER THE CONVENTION! WE'RE IN CHARGE NOW! WE WANT YOU TO JOIN US! WE THINK YOU SHOULD RUN THE FANROOM!
ME? JOIN THE CON COMMITTEE?
I COULD START DOING THINGS MY WAY!!
I COULD HAVE A BAR IN THE FANROOM!
ANOTHER ONE, I THINK!
COME ON THEN WALKIES!

.. AND GOOD MUSIC, AND "THE GREAT FORK PIE RACE", AND FAN TURN CHALLENGE" AND A NEO/BNF QUIZ....
HELLO, IAGS. HAVE YOU NOTICED? THERE'S SOMETHING ODD GOING ON!
I'M GOING TO TAKE OVER THE FAN ROOM!
YES, THEY'RE AFTER ME TOO.. KEEP SAYING SOMETHING ABOUT THE PROGRAMME..
MAYBE THERE'S STILL TIME! I WANT HERE! I'LL SEE HOW MANY OF US ARE LEFT!
"STILL TIME" "HOW MANY OF US LEFT"? WHAT'S HE ON ABOUT?
CONGRATULATIONS! I HEAR YOU'RE TAKING OVER THE FAN ROOM!
YES, I... GOOD GRIEF!! WHAT HAPPENED?!!
THE BEARD? IT'S JUST THE FIRST STEP IN THE CHANGE!
IT'S THE END OF FANDOM AS WE KNOW IT!!
YOU SEE, IAGS, THERE'S A NEW ORDER NOW!
NO-ONE CAN RESIST FOR LONG!


SOME HAVE TRIED!
THERE IS ONLY ONE ALTERNATIVE...
...JOIN US!
WE'D LIKE TO HEAR YOUR PLANS FOR THE FAN ROOM...
NOT THAT WE'D INTERFERE...
DO WHAT YOU LIKE!
MONEY NO OBJECT!
LATER
THANK GOD YOU'RE STILL HERE! THE WOMEN HAVE TAKEN OVER! WE'RE THE ONLY ONES LEFT!
I WOULDN'T BE TOO SURE ABOUT THAT!!
OH, WELL, IF YOU CAN'T BEAT THEM...
PAUL KINCAID & JIM BARKER 26·1·82

The BSFA Award

JOSEPH NICHOLAS
BSFA Award Administrator

Formerly known as the British Science Fiction Award, the British SF Association Award was conceived (according to the Encyclopaedia Nicholliana) as a counterweight to the American-dominated Hugo and Nebula Awards, to honour British authors and British novels that might otherwise have been overlooked. But the practice never seemed to match up to theory: although the Award has gone to some fine works — Bob Shaw's Orbitsville, John Brunner's The Jagged Orbit and Ian Watson's The Jonah Kit, to name but a few — the publicity it has received has been next to nonexistent, the eligibility rules were changed so frequently that no one could ever remember what they were (and in consequence soon lost interest in the whole thing), and the winners were sometimes chosen in secret by an unknown panel of judges anyway.

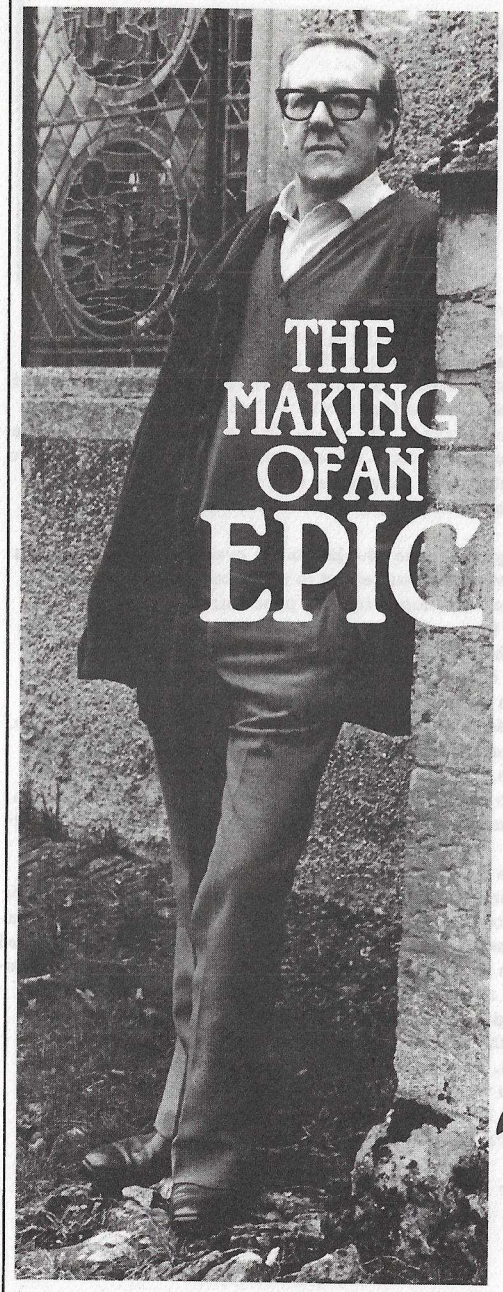
Until 1979, when — under the aegis of those who had taken over the BSFA's governing Council at that year's AGM — the Award was subjected to a thorough shake-up, with organisation and consistency being at last introduced into its procedures.

It has, since then, been given in four categories, for the best novel, short fiction, media presentation and cover artist of the preceding year (as per the Hugos), the sole criterion being that the said items must have received their first British publication or presentation during that year. (It is thus no longer limited to British authors alone, although, unsurprisingly, they do tend to feature more prominently.) It has also, since then, been divided into two stages (again as per the Hugos): a nominating round, in which BSFA members only are eligible to participate, and from whose nominations are drawn the top five in each category to go forward on to the final ballot; and a voting round, in which both members of the BSFA and attending members of that year's Eastercon are eligible to participate.

Meaning, of course, you who are reading this.

The point about involving members of the Eastercon as well as those of the BSFA is simple: it is the only popular award of its kind in Britain, and if it is to be at all representative must therefore have the widest possible voting base. (Although this has to be balanced against the need to identify and maintain its BSFA origins: hence the restriction at the nominating stage on who may vote.) A cynic might claim that this would only result in lowest-common-denominator mediocrity emerging triumphant over quality, but if past performance is anything to go by this just isn't the case — the 1980 novel winner (the first under the new system), for example, was J.G. Ballard's The Unlimited Dream Company, with Gregory Benford's Timescape sliding to victory last year in the face of stiff competition from such equally worthy contenders as Michael Bishop's Transfigurations, John Crowley's Engine Summer and Keith Roberts's Molly Zero; and when you look at the nominations on this year's final ballot...

Well, you will — along with your Programme Book, you should also have received a ballot form for the 1982 BSFA Award. So use your vote — it's just as important as anyone else's.



THE MAKING OF AN EPIC

'HELLICONIA came to mind suddenly. I wrote out its bare details in a letter to a friend, on the inspiration.

The vision had extraordinary power over me; I could think of little else. I made a sketch of the binary system I visualised, in which the drama was to be set, and sent it to an astronomer friend, Professor Iain Nicolson, at Hatfield Polytechnic.

"This wouldn't work," was his reply. "Such a system would remain stable for no more than a million years." He devised a more sophisticated system which might last for twenty million years, or more.

Originally, I had thought to write a kind of allegory of the decline of the West. Now something much grander emerged, a pattern buried deep in the human psyche.

'EVERYONE I consulted about a viable other world found it an enjoyable game in which they wanted to join. Dr Peter Cattermole helped me devise the Helliconian geology and Dr Desmond Morris its biology. Jack Cohen suggested the disease which rules Helliconia, Dr J. R. Roberts talked to me about the organisation of societies.

The great drama of life on Helliconia is shaped by its cosmic limitations. Roughly a thousand light years from Earth, it revolves with three other planets round the star Batalix, the whole group revolving in turn in a giant elipse round Freyr, fifteen times the size of our sun. In the fierce contrasts of climate, whole seasons last for centuries and civilisations rise and fall with each three millennia orbit of Freyr.

The people on the planet Helliconia enjoy and suffer much as we do, yet their histories, their societies, their customs are different. Before they were captured by the bright star Freyr, there had been an old ruling race on Helliconia, which gave way after the upheaval to a new race, evolving to take advantage of the new conditions.

'WHAT HAPPENS when that a-human race, the phagors, competes for supremacy with humanity? How does that competition fare when nature requires both species to survive if either are to do so?

In a way, it is the implications of this last question which make the whole three-volume work unique.'

'The beginning of a marvellous journey to another world–
a remarkable feat of the imagination.' JOHN FOWLES

HELLI-CONIA SPRING

Brian Aldiss

Compulsively readable, and conceived on a scale such as we have not seen since J. R. R. Tolkien, HELLICONIA SPRING is Part One of a trilogy that reveals another entire solar system, and with it a world disturbingly reflecting our own. It is an astonishing performance, the most remarkable innovation yet from Brian Aldiss.

Jonathan Cape **384 pages** **£6.95**

INTERZONE

For ten years or more there has been a gap in British Magazine publishing. We have lacked a popular magazine devoted to intelligent science fiction and fantasy and other types of imaginative prose which lie on the borders of those genres. *INTERZONE* is a new magazine of short fiction which will close that gap and bring the best fantastic fiction to a wide but discerning readership.

INTERZONE is edited and produced by *John Clute, Alan Dorey, Malcolm Edwards, Colin Greenland, Graham James, Roz Kaveney, Simon Ounsley* and *David Pringle* - we have a wealth of experience in editing and magazine production and publication. We are working as an unpaid collective; all proceeds from the magazine will go towards paying the contributors. This means that we can offer the highest competitive rates, buy the best stories, and generally hope to encourage the writing of good quality fiction.

As a collective, we believe strongly that there is a need for a new magazine to reflect the new decade of the 1980's; and that a fantastic mode of writing is best suited to deal with an increasingly complex and tragicomical world of the late 20th century. The fiction will be original; it will be of a high quality; it will provide a much needed outlet for some of the best British writers of today.

Take a look at the magazine in the dealers' room; Issue 1 is now available, containing work by:

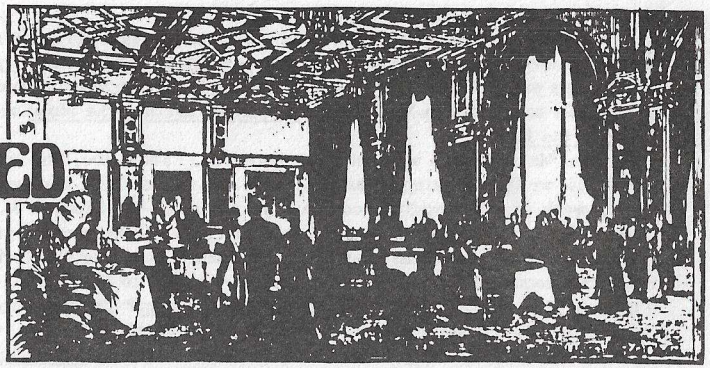
M JOHN HARRISON	: *THE NEW RAYS*
KEITH ROBERTS	: *KITEMASTER*
ANGELA CARTER	: *THE CABINET OF EDGAR ALLAN POE*
JOHN SLADEK	: *GUESTING*
MICHAEL MOORCOCK	: *THE BROTHEL IN ROSENSTRASSE*

A signing session will take place at CHANNELCON.

Already lined up for the next issue are *J G BALLARD, GARRY KILWORTH, RACHEL POLLACK, JOSEPHINE SAXTON and ALEX STEWART.*

Subscriptions(four issues) are available in the dealers' room, at the BSFA desk, or from 21 Village Street LEEDS LS4 2PR. Rates are £5.00 per annum, or £4.00 for BSFA members.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO...



DAVE LANGFORD looks into the archives

...An assembly of folk devoted to the bizarre and fantastic byways of our English prose was held — some said impiously! — over the week-end of Easter in this year of Our Lord Eighteen Hundred and Eighty-Two. With great courtesy, the Royal Society of London for the Improvement of Natural Knowledge made a free loan of their premises at Burlington House; and from the seventh to the tenth day of April, a motley and animated throng held sway in that place.

"They are strange, mad folk," said a serving-maid with whom we conversed. "But I suppose they do no harm."

The honoured guest of the occasion could of course be none other than M. Jules Verne, whose risible romances such as From the Earth to the Moon direct in 97 hours 20 minutes, and a trip round it command a great following among the fanatics or 'fans' of such ephemera. Why, some of these are even impelled by their devotion to wear strange garb: we were puzzled to see individuals striding like clockwork automata about the corridors of Burlington House, wearing stiff hats and clutching furled umbrellas in defiance of all indoor custom. All was explained, though, when we discovered that such 'fans' chose this means of expressing their devotion to M. Verne's Around the World in Eighty Days, and in particular its hero Phileas Fogg, whose supposed garb they thus slavishly imitate. Among the cognoscenti, it seems, such folk are known as 'Foggers' or 'Foggies' and are regarded with no little disdain.

And indeed, the esteem in which M. Verne himself is held would appear to be by no means universal. When the schedule of the proceedings called for him to deliver a rousing speech, there were murmurings at the announcement that M. Verne proposed instead to read passages from his forthcoming work Le rayon vert (The Green Ray — no doubt a melodrama about fish); and the gathering became positively mutinous when it transpired that the passages were to be read only in French without benefit of translation.

"The vanity and complacency of M. Verne passes all belief," we were told by one 'young Turk', a fellow of some fifteen or sixteen years who through precocity had contrived to become an honoured 'fan' guest in his own right. "It is a shabby travesty," this young Master Herbert Wells continued, "that a fellow who has not even the grace to live in England should be allowed to continue as President of Britain's Own Speculative and Fan-

tastic Association; or the BoSFA, as we term it."

The impudent Master Wells went on to read to us from a projected scientific romance of his own called, if memory serves us aright, The Chronic Argonauts. Suffice it to say that this piece of juvenilia lacks altogether that underlying support of edifying scientific realism so evident in M. Verne's From the Earth to the Moon or A Journey to the Centre of the Earth.

But Master Wells was not to be deterred. "Then, too," he cried, "the whole field of fantastic writing is being polluted by vile commercialism. A novel should be an autonomous work, a work which stands sturdy and alone — and look at M. Verne! Did he not scribble Around the Moon as a sequel to 'cash in' upon the success of From the Earth to the Moon? Can you deny that even now he speaks of debasing the work of another and better man with a sequel of his own crass devising — I refer to M. Verne's projected continuation of the late Mr. Poe's Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym? The effrontery of it! Even British authors, who should know better, are succumbing to this same rot — Sammy Butler told me at a room party last night that he's planning a sequel to Erewhon; and that Bible-thumper George MacDonald openly admits his guilt in hacking out a follow-up to The Princess and the Goblin, for publication next year. It's all Carroll's fault, of course, with his best-seller cult and sequels and spinoffs — see that moron there with his 'Why is 6 x 7 The Oldest Rule in the Book?' badge. Yes, I tell you that this artistic corruption of the sequel, the series and the trilogy is a unique evil of our own time...."

We made our excuses and left Master Wells holding forth, making tendentious statements about Mr. Gladstone's Government to a group of cronies who were perhaps a trifle the worse for their indulgence in refreshments.

Many and varied were the events during the four days of this strange 'convention' affair. At a discussion on the supernatural, a Mr. Stoker strongly argued that something might yet be made of the old theme of Vampirism: we could not help but agree with those who observed that the matter was so hackneyed and generally 'done to death' that no hope for it could be entertained. M. Louis Pasteur of France spoke on 'The Germ Theory of Convention Banquets' and quaintly asked to be refreshed with boiled water when he grew hoarse. Another discussion, on the theme (said to be traditional) of the Fair Sex and their part in fantastic writing, was ill-attended; the panel of gentlemen on the podium strove manfully to wring an hour's discussion from the subject of the late Mrs. Shelley. Still less popular was the lecture entitled 'Genetic Engineering', given by a dubious Germanic fellow called Mendel, whom I later saw leaving with an air of disillusionment.

But such formal events were not the whole of it. Mr. Oscar Wilde, a gay young fellow in his twenties who only last year published a volume of poetry, was merrily welcoming young 'neofans', treating them to glasses of absinthe and often inviting them upstairs for private discussions of the unnatural and supernatural. A young medical person named Conan Doyle was fearfully affected by the absinthe, and his face became hideous after a mere sip of the potion; Mr. R.L. Stevenson, who was autographing copies of his latest work The New Arabian Nights, was heard to say aloud, "What a terrible, cataclysmic change of features and of spirit! I wonder... there may be an idea for a book in that scene of transformation."

"I wish I'd written it," said Mr. Wilde.

"You will, Oscar, you will," quipped Mr. Stevenson.

An unkempt young man with a straggling ginger beard introduced himself to us as George Bernard Shaw, and favoured us with a disquisition upon fantastic literature's legendary Golden Age.

"I assure you its past; it doesnt exist any more," he said (we noticed with interest his refusal to employ apostrophes). "Poe, Frankenstein, The Confessions of a Justified

Sinner, Vernes better works, The Coming Race, Utopia, The Battle of Dorking, Erewhon, and of course Gullivers Travels... I could name dozens more. Theres no hope that the future can equal these peaks of the Golden Age. The genres played out now. The Life Force will simply have to shew itself in some other way in future. I wonder... perhaps the drama...?"

Certainly no reasonable man could disagree; there can be only one Golden Age, and that of the fantastic or speculative romance is assuredly past. But such disagreeable truths are easily forgotten when one listens to the exuberance of the 'Foggies' and of 'true fans' like Mr. Wilde or the visiting German enthusiast Herr Krafft-Ebing. Both of these gentlemen promise to describe this Easter gathering at suitable length in their forthcoming 'fanzines' (respectively titled The Yellow Book and Psychopathica Sexualis), which will be published — in the quaint phrasing of the coterie — 'Real Soon Now'.

The only sombre note struck in the whole eccentric week-end concerned the celebrated Mr. Charles Darwin, who delivered a serious and scientific talk establishing almost conclusively that the various races of mankind were descended from the late Bishop Wilberforce. Alas, Mr. Darwin suffered a misadventure with a pork pie of dubious antecedents and on the nineteenth day of April shuffled off this mortal coil...

(Locus, May 1882)

ALIEN DREAM

The three singer-songwriters who make up Alien Dream have been called everything from 'Cosmic Crooners' to Spaced-out Folkies who specialise in mediaeval space-rock. They mainly use guitars, mandolin, flutes and electric bass, plus various electronic effects. Indrani and Martin Shough, together with Ian Fyvie, perform songs and read poetry which can range from the hauntingly evocative to the downright science fiction crazy. They are, as far as they know, almost the only exponents in this country of a brand of music known in convention circles as "filk". This particular category of musical fantasy seems to enjoy an enthusiastic following in America.

Although Alien Dream cannot yet afford a video system they're doing the next best thing. In order to take your mind off down-to-earth things there will be a colour slide show of their own paintings, some originals of which can be inspected in the Art Show.

Although many of their songs tend more towards the fantasy realms of science fiction and are more for listening to rather than audience participation, they are full of the alien dreamscapes of tomorrow, which is, after all, what sf is all about. Many have been inspired by well-known books and embrace similar themes, like "The Green Hills of Earth".

Most of the songs and poems in their repertoire are written by Indrani, who also designs and makes her own space-age costumes. Most of the paintings have been done by Martin, in between writing two books on UFO's and singing to the Earthbound in Brighton pubs. "If 'traditional' songs are ever to sung on ships plying the spaceways," says Indrani, "then they must be written now. I think in this day and age little else is worth writing about; science fiction has literally infinite ideas. Even though Martin and I have written over one hundred songs I feel we're still only on the threshold as far as possibilities are concerned."

Three professionally recorded C60 tapes — 'Silver Sky-Rider', 'The Sea of Time' and 'New Moon on Magonia' will also be available.

FOUNDATION

THE REVIEW OF SCIENCE FICTION

Published three times a year, each issue at least 108 pages long, Foundation is one of the world's leading journals of sf criticism.

The last three issues have featured:-

*J. G. BALLARD, "From Shanghai to Shepperton."
*Raymond Z. GALLUN, "The Making of a Pulp Writer."
*M. John HARRISON, "The Last Rebel."
*George HAY, "Sleep No More..."
*Roz KAVENEY, "SF in the 1970s."
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Editor: David Pringle
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The Great PORK PIE Race

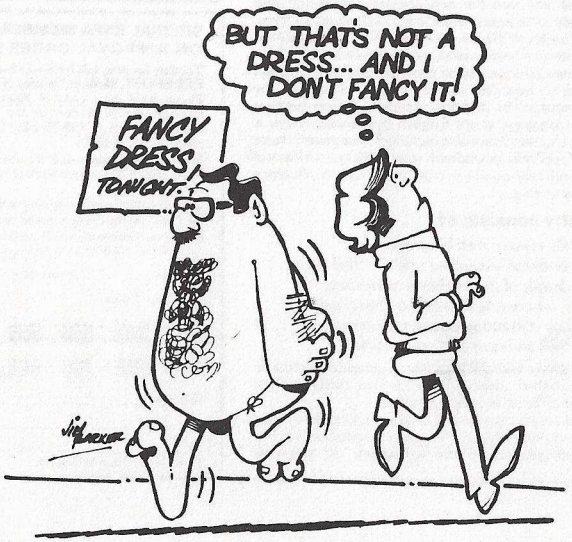
It would be nice to claim the credit for dreaming up this piece of lunacy, but in all honesty, I can't. A few months ago I was at Bob (Glasgow) Shaw's flat and, having tired of tormenting the cat, we were sitting around talking about Life, the Universe and Everything when I mentioned that I was looking for ideas for the Fan Room programme. Bob looked at me with that ruminating expression only he can manage. "Have you ever..." he said "... watched The Great Egg Race?" From there two warped minds were off and running.

The original idea was to persuade fans to exercise their brain cells by devising a gadget to transport that symbol of fannishness, a pint of beer, across a room. This concept was hurriedly changed when, on a visit to the Metropole, we discovered that the hotel were going to re-carpet the room we intended to use. (This, by the way, is not the Fan Room, but a large hall right next door. I may be the first Fan Room organiser to have an Alternate Fan Programme...) A pork pie is just as fannish as a pint, but not as messy. At least, not until after you eat it...

A few fans learned of the project in advance and were quite enthusiastic. Ian Maule suggested a few rule changes before dashing off to build his device. I had promises of devices from Dave Langford, Bob Shaw and Rob Jackson kept phoning me for information and clarification of the rules. When I went to FOKT meetings I was bombarded with questions, suggestions and ideas: an airship; a hover-powered pie; a radiocontrolled pie; a hang-glider pie; a cat with a pie tied round its neck and a firework rocket stuffed up its backside... (That last idea was hurriedly squashed.)

If the ideas I've heard about come off we should have, if we need it, proof that sf fans are the bunch of loonies we think we are. I'm still waiting for the first nuclear-powered device, though. The fun starts on Saturday afternoon in the Clarence Suite (right next to the Fan Room. Visit that too!).

— Jim Barker



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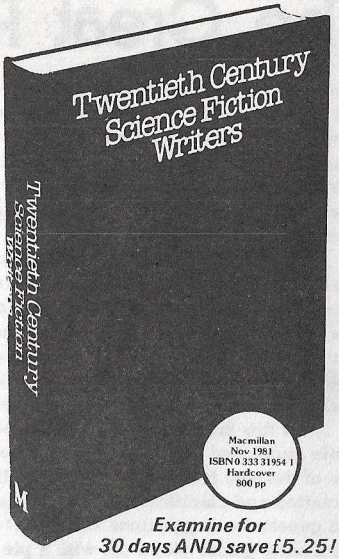

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Further details from:
The Membership Secretary, Sandy Brown
18 Gordon Terrace, Blantyre, G72
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President: Arthur C. Clarke

FILMS

A personal overview of the films showing at Channelcon
by **ROY MACINSKI**

COMA (dir. Michael Crichton, USA, 1977)

Michael Crichton is probably best known by sf fans for his movies The Andromeda Strain and The Terminal Man, plus his film Westworld. Given his background (he graduated with an MD from Harvard Medical School), it is perhaps not surprising that an underlying medical theme is present in much of his work, but it is with this adaptation of Robin Cook's bestseller that this theme comes to the fore.

The story centres on a nurse, played by Genevieve Bujold, working in a large American hospital who becomes worried by the large number of patients entering a comatose state after apparently routine operations. Her anxiety heightens when she discovers that these patients are being mysteriously whisked away from the hospital.

Perhaps more than any other film that Crichton has been involved with, Coma illustrates the consummate ease with which he builds tension and suspense.

Sf it is not — but a tight, tense and highly entertaining thriller it is.

DEMON SEED (dir. Donald Cammell, USA, 1977)

Proteus IV is a super-intelligent computer which, soon after being switched on, starts to misbehave. Its creator-scientist (Fritz Weaver) decides to shut it down in order to find out what is going wrong. However, he forgets about the terminal located in the basement of his house which, at the time, is being used by his estranged wife, played by Julie Christie. Using the house, which contains a wide collection of electronic gadgetry, Proteus imprisons the woman with the intention of impregnating her in order to give its being a human form.

Beneath the film's high-tech visual gloss, Donald Cammell takes a brave stab at, and to a very real extent succeeds in breathing new life into this tired and cliched old idea.

PICNIC AT HANGING ROCK (dir. Peter Weir, Aus., 1977)

Arguably the film which brought the Australian cinema its first truly international recognition.

The film is based on a true story which recounts how, at the turn of the nineteenth century, a party of Australian schoolgirls disappeared under some very strange circumstances.

Weir doesn't try to supply any answers to the mystery, but instead focuses on the story's more enigmatic elements. To this day it still remains one of the finest movies ever to have come out of Australia. Indeed, the rich atmospheres, beautiful photography and haunting music all go to make Picnic at Hanging Rock a must.

JABBERWOCKY (dir. Terry Gilliam, GB, 1977)

Michael Palin plays a cooper's son who, soon after his father's death, goes in search of

the one he loves. He gets waylaid, however, along the way, via a series of misadventures, into becoming a Knight's squire and it is in this post that he encounters the fearsome beast that has been terrorising the land — the Jabberwocky.

Director Terry Gilliam infuses the film with much of the feel and flavour of his surreal cartoons, but for me, is far less successful in balancing on the shaky tightrope of good taste. I feel too often the film, possibly because of the lack of a very strong humorous core, slips off this tightrope and becomes merely grotesque.

Still, when it comes to questions of taste, by its very nature one's response is highly subjective. So if you haven't yet seen Jabberwocky, why not see it here and decide whether your idea of what is and what is not good taste is the same as mine.

PERFORMANCE (dir. Nicholas Roeg/Donald Cammell, UK, 1970)

Although made in 1968, this film sat on the shelves at Warner Bros. for two years gathering dust until time caught up with the film's eclectic style.

The story is fairly straightforward — an on-the-run gangster (James Fox) hides out with an ex-rock star (Mick Jagger). However, in Roeg's hands this run-of-the-mill story becomes complex and provocative in its use of explicit sex and violence.

Soon after its release the film rapidly attained cult status and frankly it's rather difficult for me to see why, although perhaps that's more of a symptom of not having lived through the era it represents rather than any flaw in the film itself. But it must be said that nearly everybody involved with this film went on to better things, with the notable exception of James Fox, who ended his career with this, his finest performance.

CARRIE (dir. Brian De Palma, US, 1976)

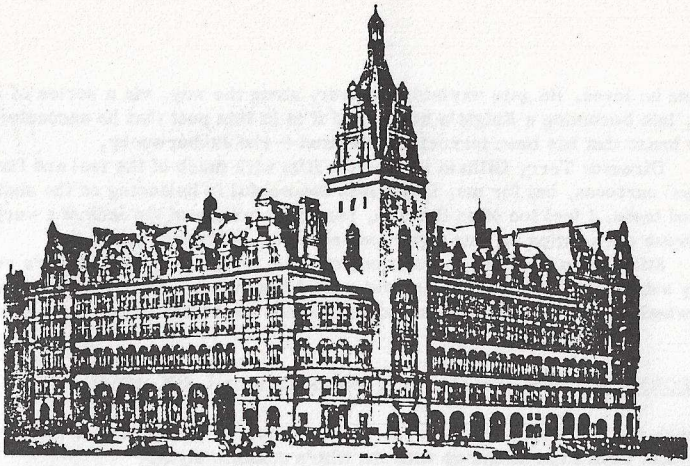
Based on the best-selling novel by Stephen King, Carrie tells the story of a high-school girl who is tormented by her fellow students and dominated by a mother who is a religious fanatic. As the film progresses we see her becoming aware of the fact that she possesses telekinetic powers; powers which she keeps under control until just as she feels she has finally won her classmates' acceptance, she is subjected to a humiliating and degrading practical joke. This pushes her too far and she unleashes her powers to the full.

De Palma's films have never been noted for their subtlety and Carrie is no exception. However, he is without doubt a master of suspense and is outstanding at manipulating an audience's emotions. Almost hidden by De Palma's visual pyrotechnics there are some fine performances; most memorable of which is Sissy Spacek's portrayal of Carrie herself.

FANTASTIC PLANET (dir. Rene Laloux, French/Czech, 1973)

This animated cartoon film is set on a distant planet where a group of humans rebel against the giant humanoids who have kept them as playthings. Although the animation techniques used are rather crude, Rene Laloux uses these limitations to his advantage and manages to create some very unusual imagery, which is given all the more power by the film's sinister atmosphere.

Ultimately, I cannot help but feel slightly disappointed by Fantastic Planet for, if the same level of ingenuity and imagination that has gone into its execution had gone into its writing, then instead of being just a good movie it could have been a great one.



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TAFF

TELLING YOU FOR THE LAST TIME

DAVE LANGFORD

Breathes there a fan out there with soul so dead as not to have heard of the TransAtlantic Fan Fund? Can even the newest Channelcon member have escaped the saturation publicity campaign which reminded everyone that since the early 1950s TAFF has been transferring worthy European fans to attend major American conventions, and vice-versa? Surely no-one can have failed to deduce from available evidence (such as, at last resort, this sentence) that on each occasion the lucky TAFF delegate is chosen by fans' votes on either side of the Atlantic, each vote being accompanied by donations which — together with gifts from fans and conventions, proceeds from auctions or fundraising fanzines, and random acts of generosity — supply the actual funds for the TAFFman's Worldcon or Eastercon trip?

No, I didn't think I needed to mention any of that.

We have no TAFF delegate at Channelcon this year — no strange tentacled being from the distant galaxies of North America. The suitably mindboggling Stu Shiffman filled this role last year, and some of his reactions should be on display in the Fan Room. In 1982, though, it's our turn to deport some weird person — to the Chicago Worldcon at the end of summer — and TAFF voting should be raging about you even as you read this. The candidates are Rog Peyton and Kevin Smith, who need no introduction (merely a short and apologetic afterword...); the final voting deadline is 17 April 1982; dig out your TAFF form from Progress Report 3 or ask me for one at Channelcon, and help sway the very balance of destiny. All this is why I'm writing a convention-book piece on TAFF for, probably, the last time.

When Stu Shiffman became the 1981 TAFF person, he also became North American Administrator of the fund, entitling him to raise and account for TAFF money, distribute ballot forms, publicize the cause and — not too often — get some sleep. I was similarly lumbered in 1980: and with many a cackle of evil glee I shall be passing the black spot to Rog or Kevin in mere weeks. Though probably not the most staggeringly successful Euro-administrator since TAFF began, I'm pleased to mention with elaborate casualness that during my "term of office" the cosmic generosity of fans has boosted the depleted (by my trip) UK kitty to an unprecedented four-figure sum.

TAFF has been around a long while: the first winner was A. Vincent Clarke in 1954 (who incidentally should be reappearing at Channelcon). Since then, there have been changes. US worldcons — though not, thankfully, our Eastercons — have grown to such intimidating size that TAFF delegates find it hard to search out and make contact with "real" US fandom, while airfares dropped so low in recent years that some fans muttered, "TAFF is unnecessary — anyone can afford to go anyway if he/she wants to." Thus the fund has been questioned, and a good thing too — anything which goes without saying can all too easily stagnate. As it happens, supercheap airfares seem to be on their way out (cf. Laker), while apparently prospective British TAFF delegates would still prefer to experience the legendary horrors of one US worldcon for themselves no matter what the size. (An alternative suggestion, that our TAFFers should instead visit several large US regional cons over a period of two or three weeks, is mildly controversial but may yet be tried.)

Personally I think TAFF is a Good Thing, and I'm still hacking away at a lengthy account of my 1980 trip for eventual publication and sale in aid of the fund. Other resplendent goodies will meanwhile be available from me at Channelcon or the new Euro-administrator afterwards. For fairly obvious reasons the name of this entity is still un-

certain, though we've narrowed it down to either Peyton or Smith — but detailed results of this TAFF campaign will be posted in a few weeks to anyone who has sent a donation with or without a vote. Or, for cheapskates, a stamped addressed envelope.

— Dave Langford, 22 Northumberland Ave., Reading, Berks. RG2 7PW.

PAST TAFF WINNERS

1954	A. Vincent ('Ving') Clarke (did not make trip)
1955	H.K. (Ken) Bulmer
1956	Lee Hoffman (declined)
1957	Bob Madle
1958	Ron Bennett
1959	Don Ford
1960	Eric Bentcliffe
1961	Ron Ellik
1962	Ethel Lindsay
1963	Wally Weber
1964	Arthur Thomson ('ATom')
1965	Terry Carr
1966	Thomas Schlück
1968	Steve Stiles
1969	Eddie Jones
1970	Elliot Shorter
1971	Mario Bosnyak
1973	Len & June Moffatt
1974	Peter Weston
1976	Roy Tackett, Bill Bowers (tie: Bowers did not make trip)
1977	Peter Roberts
1979	Terry Hughes
1980	Dave Langford
1981	Stu Shiffman
1982	....

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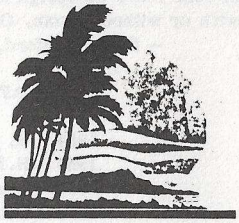


GUFF or, how to get to Australia and back

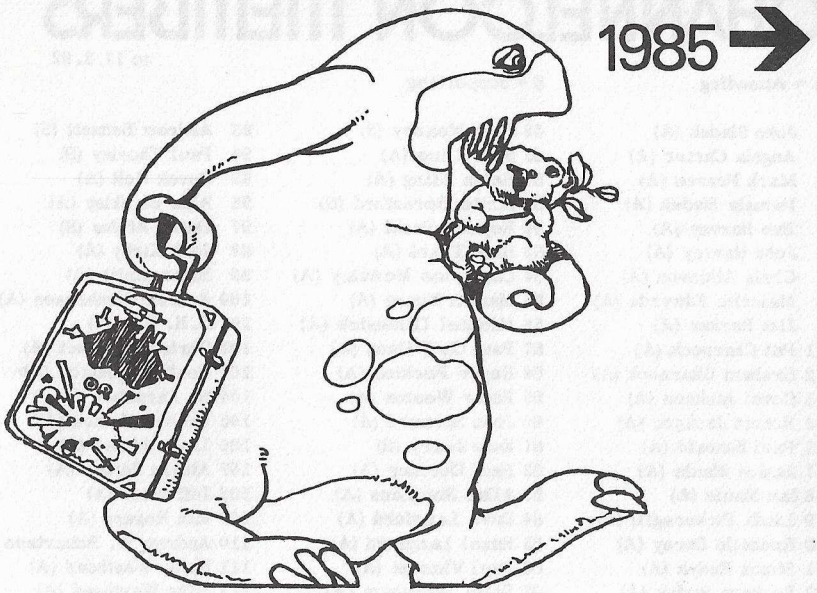
GUFF is the Get Up-and-over — or Get Under, depending on which way it's running — Fan Fund, which links Britain and Australia, sending a well-known fan from each country to attend the other's national sf convention. It was initiated in 1979, bringing John Foyster (editor of Chunder! and famed Melbourne wit and raconteur) to the Worldcon in Brighton, and ran the other way in 1981, sending Joseph Nicholas (editor of Napalm in the Morning and noted poser-about-Pimlico) to Advention in Adelaide. The next northbound race, therefore, will bring another Australian fan to the 1983 Eastercon, and although nominations have not yet officially opened (watch newszines like Ansible and Thyme for exact details), we already have one strong possible candidate in the offing; and more will doubtless step forward at the appropriate time.

This means that the next southbound race will be timed to send a British fan to (if the bid is successful) the Melbourne Worldcon in 1985 — and to do that we need money, for GUFF, like all fan charities, depends wholly upon the generosity of fandom, and although there is currently sufficient in the kitty to pay for one-third of the (expensive, in comparison with trans-Atlantic ones) airfare, we shall need to raise the remaining two-thirds pretty smartly. To this end, donations of all kinds are most eagerly solicited and just as enthusiastically welcomed — the proceeds from some of the material on offer in Channelcon's auctions, in fact, will go to the fund, and as the current UK administrator I will be pleased to sell you a copy of By British, the fanthology of the best British fanwriting of the seventies I co-edited with Ian Maule (who, with his wife Janice, did all the real work, actually) and which was published to commemorate the Brighton Worldcon. (My trip report will be out RSN, folks — or at least as soon as I've found the stamina necessary to edit my quarter-of-a-million word long first draft down to a more reasonable length.)

In the meantime, although there isn't an "official" Australian representative at Channelcon, we have managed to import a couple of Australian fans for your delectation and delight, one of whom will be participating in one of the programme items in the Fan Room and thus well placed to give you the low-down on what Australian fandom is really like. (Yes — at last the real truth about Marc Ortlieb's struggles against fannish indecency, Leigh Edmonds's addiction to the smell of model aeroplane glue, Jack Herman's love-affair with the ghost of Humphrey Bogart, John Foyster's crushing success as the best axe-murderer of 1981, and other things too disgusting to mention.) Or you can talk to those British fans who've actually been there, like Chris Priest and myself, who can dismiss with but a single pitying sneer all those tedious old stories about Australia as a nation of beer-swilling cricket-lovers and tell you of what life is really like there — the climate, the scenery, the cities, the people, and even the kangaroos.

Have a good convention!

— Joseph Nicholas, GUFF Administrator, Room 9, 94 St. George's Sq., Pimlico, London SW1Y 3QY.



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Science fiction fans have good reason to remember Melbourne and the conventions it can run. Melbourne is the city where AUSSIECON, the extremely successful 1975 Worldcon, was held, a convention widely regarded as one of the best in recent memory by those who attended. Many of the same people who were on the AUSSIECON committee are now on the bidding committee for Melbourne in '85.

There's nowhere else quite like Australia. There's no experience quite like attending a World Science Fiction Convention.

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The British agent for the bid is Joseph Nicholas, Room 9, 94 St George's Square, Pimlico, London SW1Y 3QY. From him you can obtain more information about the bid or about Australian fandom. He also has bid T-shirts for sale for £6 each, and £6 will also get you a two-year subscription to both KANGA RUSE, the bid newsletter, and THE ANTIPODEAN ANNOUNCER, the bid promotional bulletin.

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to 17.3.82

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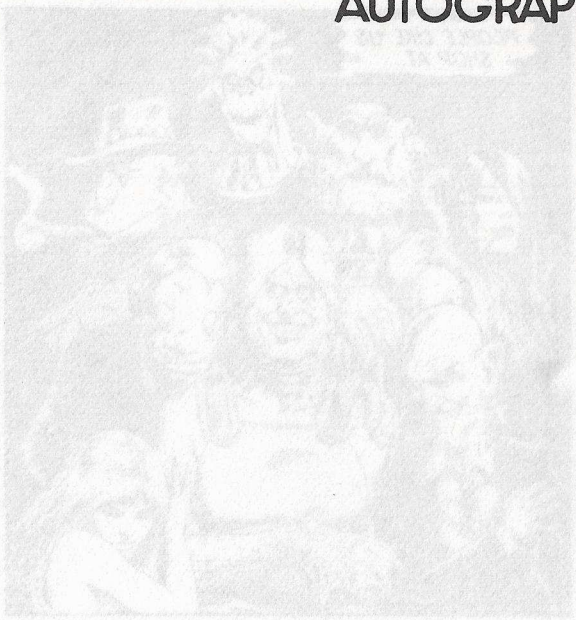

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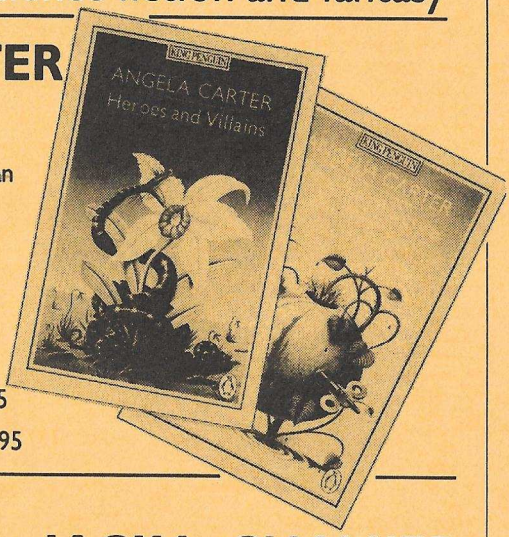

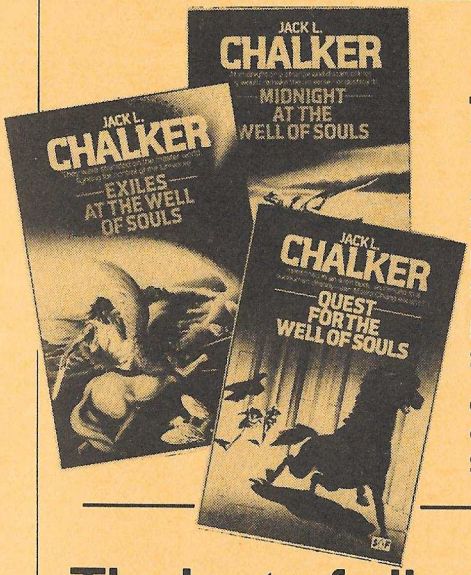

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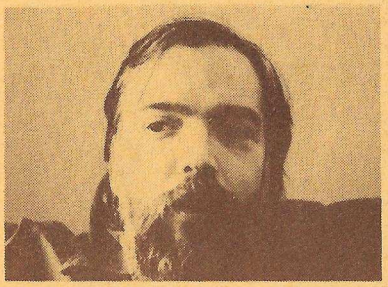

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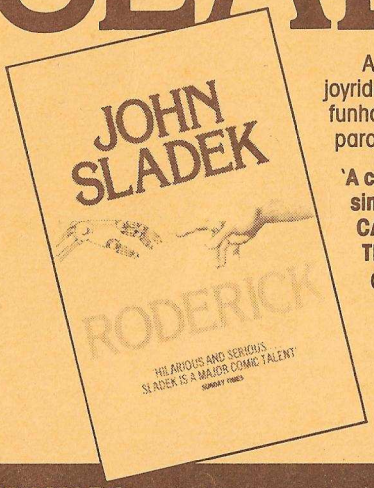

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